

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Applicant has discovered an *in situ* method of preparing quaternary ammonium methocarbonate salts and quaternary ammonium alkylcarbonate salts in high yield from tertiary amines, methanol, and at least one of a cyclic carbonate, an aliphatic polyester (such as a polycarbonate), or an ester (such as a carbonate ester), and their subsequent conversion to quaternary ammonium bicarbonates, quaternary ammonium carbonates or both in a one-pot reaction. According to one embodiment of the invention, the method includes reacting an amine and methanol with at least one of a cyclic carbonate and an aliphatic polyester to yield a quaternary ammonium methocarbonate. This method does not produce or require the handling of corrosive quaternary ammonium hydroxides. Another embodiment is a method of preparing quaternary ammonium alkylcarbonate salts by reacting tertiary amines, methanol, and an ester. The quaternary ammonium methocarbonate or alkylcarbonate can be converted to the corresponding bicarbonate, carbonate, or mixture thereof by methods known in the art.

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